



VOL. XXV.

AUGUSTA, MAINE, THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 5, 1857.

NO. 11.



Our Home, our Country, and our Brother Man.

THE CHESS QUESTION.

We have recently had a little discussion in our columns respecting chess, with our neighbor A. M., in which, owing to a dearth of facts, nothing very decided in the way of clearing up the mystery was elicited, and so the question stands in the fog as usual. Our friend A. M. stated by way of fact, however, that wheat from the same bushel, reared on his warm intervals land was little troubled with chess, while that which was reared on cold wet upland had a good deal of it. We have met with similar statements in the Rural New Yorker of last week, which we copy below. We also copy another article on chess from the same paper. One of the writers here mentioned, calls, as we have, for more exact experiments and observations. He, like our friend A. M., says that wheat on cold, wet lands is more liable to chess than on warm free land. Well, here, then, is a starting point, and we propose to some of our friends who have winter wheat now on their lands, to try the following experiment, viz: As soon as practicable in the spring, take up a number of roots or stools of winter wheat, and set them out in a warm situation with deep free soil and mark the results. Again, take up some of the roots or stools of winter wheat, that have well tillered or spread into stools; separate each root into two parts, put one part into a flower pot or large box filled with cold wet earth, and set it in some place where it will remain or be kept more or less during the ensuing season. Place the other half of the same root in a flower pot or large box filled with warm rich mould, and place it where it will remain or be kept more or less during the season, and mark the results.

By some such experiments we can begin to approximate to something like a true solution of this long vexed question.

"Degeneration of Wheat."—Eds. RURAL NEW-YORKER:—Being a constant reader of your paper, I noticed the article on "Degeneration of Wheat." For one I find myself incontrovertibly convinced that wheat and rye turn to chess. In the seed time of the year 1810 or '17, I saw over ten acres of beautiful beach and maple land "logged and burned," and nicely prepared as ever any new field was for wheat and in the latter part of September, sown with prime, clean, "red chaff" variety of wheat, which came up nicely. The land was of various soils, some parts clay, some black mud in swales, and other places loamy land. In November of that year this wheat field looked admirably. The following March and April were unusually wet and cold. Several long cold rains occurred, and soon this wheat field became yellow in spots where the surface water stood, and in those places the wheat nearly all turned to chess, while on the higher, airy land there was first-rate wheat and no chess, and so alternately through the whole field. This crop was put in with the drag or harrow only, as was then the custom on the "Holland Purchase," on beach and maple land universally, as the roots lay so near the surface that plowing there, was "out of the question."

Again, in the August of 1825, we harvested the very nicest crop of fifteen acres of new land wheat put in the same way, and this stubble we burned over soon after harvest, and got it so that it looked like new land again. In fact it looked blacker than when we finished logging it. In about three weeks after burning the stubble we sowed it again to wheat, 14 bushels of prime White Flint Wheat per acre, and out of the whole field we did not harvest a bushel of wheat, but instead we got twenty-four wagon loads of pure chess, out green for hay. This was then, to my mind, proof positive that wheat did turn to chess.

I also believe to turn chess on some of the more tender varieties of wheat, in winter, in a wet muddy time, and let them crop it bare, will cause it to turn to chess; as I once had a fine field half of which was the early "Hutchinson wheat," the other White Flint. The former was nearly spoiled in this way and very full of chess, while the hardy Flint was clear. I had sown none but pure seed wheat of each kind above named.

A. NIAGARA FARMER.

Niagara Falls, N. Y., 1857.

Editors RURAL:—I always feel nervous when I hear farmers, (and sometimes too, those who pride themselves on being good farmers), express their belief in the doctrine of the transmutation of wheat to chess.

Although now engaged in other pursuits, I spent the first twenty-one years of my life on a farm, and consequently can speak from positive experience. For several years, I instituted careful experiments on the chess question, and in due season of my neighbors, (I am sorry to say they were few), to do the same, and after testing it for years, we came to the conclusion that if we did not sow chess there would be no transmutation—that with clean seed our wheat would not turn to chess. We could always get some chess from our seed wheat after we thought it perfectly clean, by carefully putting it through a good farming mill.

What is needed in this case, as well as in many other cases, apparently anomalous, in agricultural operations, is a series of carefully conducted experiments. There are hundreds of intelligent farmers who never instituted an experiment on the subject, who will tell you that they know that wheat will turn to chess.

Let us have this subject fully and fairly tested. Reader, if you are a farmer, make up your mind that you will know for yourself, the truth or falsity of this theory, and at once commence a series of careful experiments and continue them through a term of years, until you are fully satisfied on the subject. One or two years of experiment, conducted with care so much care, will not settle the question. If so great an anomaly exists in nature's operations, let us have it fairly demonstrated.

R. B. W.

HOW DO BEES MAKE WAX?

There seems to be two theories among the Bee men, in regard to the production of wax by Bees. One class contend that the bee can and does produce wax from honey; that it has the faculty of converting by some process, which it can set at work in its stomach, a portion of the honey which it has stored up into wax, and as fast as it is so changed, it exudes through some pore, or gland, or outlet of its skin between the scales or rings of its body, from which it is taken and built into comb. They infer this from the fact that bees when put into an empty hive, as when they have just swarmed, immediately build comb from the wax thus eliminated.

This theory is combated by Dr. Goodby of Michigan. In the February No. of the Michigan Farmer, he has a well written article upon this subject, illustrated with a cut showing the anatomical structure of some parts of the bee.

He here asserts, "wax is a vegetable principle and not an animal product—no animal possesses the power of secreting wax. Bees are enabled to eliminate the wax contained in pollen, and store it away between the rings of the abdomen, and in the hollow of the thighs." The honey rings of the abdomen, he says are destitute of glands, as is also the skin or cuticle which unites them.

This is the present state of the war question.

ADULTERATION OF GUANO.

Mr. Editor:—A friend has just called my attention to an article on guano, by S. P. M., of Cape Elizabeth, which appeared in your issue of the 8th ult. As a party deeply interested, I crave a place in your columns for reply.

S. P. M. says that in his experiments in the use of guano he has received no benefit. But on visiting Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, he ascertained the reason of the unfavorable results of those experiments, viz: the farmers in those sections purchase of the agents of the Peruvian government, and therefore obtain the pure article—and adds, "If it is first bought by certain dealers, it is adulterated and then put in the market." He also brought home a sample to compare with that he bought here, and found the difference as great as between ashes and clay.

Now, I am fully aware that in nearly all the large markets, adulterated guano is abundant, and that hundreds of farmers, to save one cent, or even one half cent per pound in the cost, victimize themselves. But it is just as certain that if these same victims would cast off this "penny-wise" propensity, they can always obtain a supply of pure guano at just rates.

I am at loss to know what facilities these southern farmers enjoy beyond the reach of their eastern brethren. The only agents of the Peruvian government are in New York and Baltimore, and unless all honesty resides south of those cities, it would seem that adulterations might be found there as well as here.

I have said I am an interested party. For several years I have sold a very large portion of the guano which has been used in Western Maine. I have supplied several dealers—I know the men, and feel well assured that the guano was not adulterated while in their hands. For my own part I think this statement will suffice. I have in no instance purchased of "middle men," but have ever received my supplies direct from the stores of the Peruvian government, and do know that, at all times, I have furnished my patrons with a genuine, unadulterated article. Such is my confidence in this fact, that I have kept, as they will know a standing offer of one dollar per pound for all the adulterated matter which the strictest analysis can detect in the guano I sell.

I have now some 150 tons in my store, and I invite S. P. M., or any one else, to the closest chemical scrutiny, renewing that offer for adulterations which the test may designate.

S. P. M. will see that his insinuation is altogether too vague and general, and that he owes it to justice to point out the "certain dealers," who cheated him.

In conclusion, I will just say that S. P. M. need not have journeyed so far to learn whether he was cheated. If he or any other will call at my office, I will cheerfully furnish them with three or four exceedingly simple tests, either of which the farmer can apply without cost, that will unerringly detect adulterations in guano. Even employing a chemist to analyze the guano purchased of these "certain dealers" would be a more economical plan than employing an agent as suggested by the writer in question—unless, indeed, S. P. M. shall feel philanthropically disposed to give his services in that capacity.

NATHAN WINSLOW, 104 Union Wharf.

Portland, Feb. 28, 1857.

P. S. Mr. Wm. Sparrow of this city, proprietor of the "Maine Agricultural Ware House," usually receives his supplies of guano through me, and I have no hesitation in asserting that farmers who may purchase of him will get a perfectly pure article.

N. W.

RANDOM THOUGHTS AND QUERIES.

Mr. Editor:—Can you or some of your correspondents tell me the cause of so many wormy apples? Is it done by a fly? At what time in the year? I think seven-eighths of my apples are wormy.

I killed a sheep this fall, she had a cough for a year past, she was very poor; her lights were full of bunches, some as large as an egg, and full of matter about as hard as lard. I would inquire, do sheep have the consumption? [Yes, Sir, Ed.]

I helped to kill a cow a year or two ago, that made bloody water, her liver was as large again as it should be; I think the colored fluid came from the liver. Do cattle have the liver complaint? [Yes, indeed, Ed.]

One of my neighbors has a cow that calved in April last, he told me on the 8th of December that they had sold two hundred cwt. of butter besides what they used in the family; they don't think her much of a cow, she is put down on the valuation about three-fourths price. [How much did they use, and what was the price? Ed.]

I have written before about my corn, Vol. 22, No. 39. I intend to send you some; it was raised in 1854, saved for seed, and has hung on a board nailed to the rafters up to the present time. [Send it along, it will be very acceptable. Ed.]

A. FARMER.

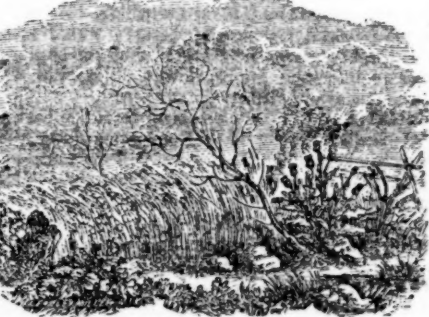
Blanchard, January, 1857.

TWO MODES OF PLANTING AND MANAGING FRUIT TREES ILLUSTRATED.

The following keen but truthful illustrations of the different modes of planting and cultivating trees were devised by Bro. Harris, Editor of the Genesee Farmer. They speak to the eye as well as to the ear. As the members of the "Slapdash" family are very numerous in Maine, "Look here upon this Picture, and on this!"



Farmer Slapdash having purchased some apple trees from a pedlar, because they were cheap, proceeds to plant them in an old meadow, and hits on a novel and expeditious method of making the holes with Squire Forecast's post-hole auger, borrowed from the occasion.



Farmer Slapdash, finding the trees do not succeed so well in grass land as in the cultivated field of Farmer Forecast, breaks up his orchard, and, in order to shade the land, he sows it to oats.



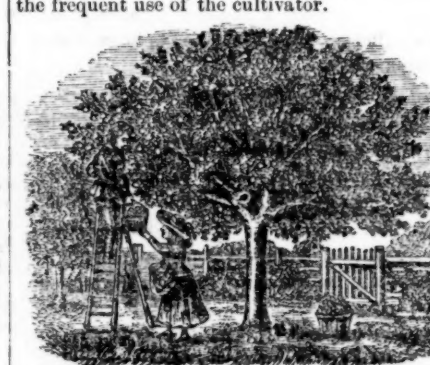
Farmer Slapdash makes up his mind that fruit culture is a humbug.



Farmer Forecast having previously underdrained, subsoiled and manured the land, plants a few carefully selected fruit trees in large holes, carefully spreading out the small fibrous roots, and covering them with fine, light soil, and then stakes, prunes and mulches them.



Farmer Forecast puts a little fresh mulch round the trees, and sows nothing on the land but a few beans and other household crops, in rows, and keeps the soil loose and free from weeds by the frequent use of the cultivator.



Farmer Forecast, his wife, and his bright, healthy children are of a different opinion.

MISCHIEF DONE BY POISONING FOXES.

Dr. HOLMES:—Upon reading an article in the Farmer of the 5th, on poisoning foxes, I fully concurred with your opinion therein expressed. Those who practice the art of poisoning foxes with strychnine, not only endanger the lives of the dogs, but those of the most valuable of domestic animals. I once knew a farmer to lose a very valuable young horse, by one of his hench boys placing salted meat, charged with strychnine in his pasture; the horse, relishing the salt, licked the ground where the bait had been, which caused a series of violent spasms until relieved by death. Truly, some have horses not intrinsically worth much, and yet, the owners have an attachment to them, and for some reason or cause that concerns them alone. And for this reason I think it best for the hunters to go by the "good old chestnut rule," which the doctor quoted in the above named paper.

PHILIP.

Portland, Feb. 23, 1857.

NOTE. Hogs that have been turned out to run in pastures and woods, have been thus poisoned. This strychnine is too dangerous an article to be dropped around in the reckless and careless manner it is.

Ed.

ANGUILLINE IN WHEAT.

Dr. HOLMES:—Believing that the facts which have been recently published by M. C. Davaine, respecting the remarkable vitality of the common anguilline found in mildewed wheat, would be interesting to many of the readers of the Farmer, especially as they contain valuable information of a practical kind, to those who wish to keep up with the improvements in agriculture, and are endeavoring to ascertain the causes of unforeseen failures of crops, at least, to the casual observer, I have prepared them, in a suitable form for a newspaper article, partly in my own words, yet, using another's freely without quoting them as such.

The experiments show that in the larvae state these insects are endowed with the power of remaining dry and apparently dead for several years, and again recovering their power of movements on being moistened with water, as in the case of several of the infusorial animalcules. They exhibit a very remarkable power of resistance to the action of violent poisons, if they do not act upon the tissues of the body. M. C. Davaine found by experiments that opium, salts of morphia, belladonna, atropine, (obtained from belladonna,) strychnine and its compounds, have no action on these minute animals, though so deadly in their effects on those of a more complex organization. In a concentrated solution or paste of these substances, they continued to live a fortnight. Nicotine, (obtained from tobacco,) on the contrary, soon destroyed their movements, but not their vitality; for, though kept several days in contact with this substance, they became as lively as ever when freed from it by washing. He found that organic matters, in a state of decomposition, also had the same effect upon the anguilline as nicotine, especially those of animal origin, such as small pieces of meat, cheese, or a little paste, put into water containing them, rendering their bodies straight and stiff in the course of a few hours in hot weather, although they would speedily recover their movements again on being washed in pure water. This experiment may frequently be repeated upon the same individuals, producing torpidity and resuscitating them at pleasure.

It is not a little remarkable that, notwithstanding their tenacity of life, these anguilline are speedily destroyed by contact with acids, a circumstance the more singular, as other animals of the same class live and breed in vinegar. Sulphuric acid, diluted with two hundred volumes of water, kills them in a few hours—truly a homeopathic dose, and may advantageously be employed to destroy them in seed corn.

The ability with which these larvae are able to support an intense cold is another remarkable circumstance, though heat is speedily fatal to them. Davaine exposed them to a temperature of 4° below zero, Fahrenheit, for several hours, without killing them; but do not say this was not very cold, because January gave us an example of more than 40° colder than this; though they perish at 148° F., while the rotifer and tardigrade animalcules support a heat of 212° equal to boiling water.

These observations are a valuable and interesting addition to our knowledge of the economy of the more minute forms of animal life, by aiding us the better to preserve some of our most valuable cereal grains from destruction, so far as regards their value for seed or bread. Hoping this may be useful to some one, it is submitted, for thought and reflection, to the intelligent farmers of Maine.

Phillips, Me.

NOTE. We should be happy to hear from O. W. T., as often as his leisure will permit. Do these little serpents that he speaks of, in the mildew of wheat, cause the mildew—or does the mildew only afford them a suitable pasture? Are they the cause or effect of mildew? Ed.

HENS AND EGGS.

For several years past I have spent a few weeks of the latter part of August on the Kennebec river. The lady with whom I have stopped is a highly accomplished and intelligent housewife. She supports a "henery," and from her I derived my information in this matter. She told me that for many years she had been in the habit of administering to her hens, with their common food, at the rate of a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper each alternate day, to a dozen of her fowls. Last season, when I was with her, each morning she brought in from twelve to fourteen eggs, having but sixteen hens in all. She again and again experimented in the matter, by omitting to feed with cayenne for two or three days. The consequences invariably was that her product of eggs fell off to five or six per day. The same effect of using the cayenne is produced in the winter as summer.

(Boston Transcript.)

ORDER. Never leave things lying about—a shawl here, a pair of shippers there, and a bonnet somewhere else—trusting to a servant to see things to rights. No matter how many servants you have, it is a miserable habit, and if its source is not in the intellectual and moral character, it will inevitably terminate there. If you have used the dipper, towel, tumbler, &c., put them back in their places, and you will know where to find them when you want again. Or if you set an example of carelessness, do not blame your servants for following it. Children should be taught to put things back in their places as soon as they are old enough to use them; and if each member of the family were to observe this simple rule, the house would never get much out of order, and a large amount of vexation and useless labor would be avoided.

SETTLING LANDS—QUERY.

Mr. Editor:—I noticed in the Farmer of the 12th ult., a report of the Land Agent, for 1856. It would oblige me much to be informed in what part of Maine the public lands are located; and what is their condition with regard to soil, productions, etc.; how they can be obtained, and in what quantities; and, in short, to have all the information that would be desirable for a purchaser. I also wish to enquire what part of the State would be most suitable for a man that has plenty of courage; a good share of perseverance; some knowledge of farming; a great desire for improvement therein; enjoys good health, (although not so strong as some); is willing and anxious to settle on a small tract of land, and to be settled with regard to this part, especially the best mode of converting its saccharine properties into crystallized sugar; and it is highly probable that better varieties of it will ultimately be discovered, at least for certain localities, than that now current in this country. For the present, however, it is advisable to continue and extend the cultivation of that which is accessible, and thus test the effect of acclimation on the character of the plant and the sweetness of its juice. We suspect that for Louisiana, Florida and Texas, the Sorghum of Southern Africa will ultimately be found preferable to that obtained from France by our Patent Office, and from China by France. If it prove that this plant, or certain varieties of it, can be grown from year to year in semi-tropical latitudes from the same root, as the cane is grown in the West Indies, and that two or more crops of sugar-yielding stalks may be cut from that root each season, then there can be little doubt that our Southern States are destined still to lead the North in the production of sugar. For the present, however, it suffices that the Sorghum may be grown wherever Indian Corn will usually ripen—that its abundant juice makes a very pleasant syrup or molasses, to which it is easily reduced by boiling away four-fifths of it in the ordinary mode of sugar-making from the sap of the maple—and that the leaves and stalks, whether green or dry, of the Sorghum, make an admirable fodder for cattle, horses or hogs, while the seeds are eaten with avidity by fowls also, to justify the general interest evinced in its cultivation. We propose, therefore, to condense into the smallest space some practical directions to the prospective cultivator as follows:

Byfield, Mass., Feb. 18th, 1857.

NOTE. The public lands of Maine are in the north-eastern section of the State, principally in the county of Aroostook. The growth is a mixture of birch, beech, rock maple, and pine. The soil varies, according to location. The rock in many parts is limestone, in other parts, a variety of slate and of sandstone, with little or no granite. It will produce wheat, and other grains, root crops of all kinds, all the varieties of grasses in luxuriance. Indian corn is not quite so sure a crop as in Massachusetts, though good crops of this are often raised there. It is a good grazing country. We should recommend for a Pioneer to select some location as near the settlements on the Aroostook river as he could. There are lots in and about townships, we believe, appropriated in that section of the State, for settling lands. These are disposed of by the Land Agent to actual settlers for fifty cents per acre, the most of which is payable in annual installments in work on the roads in the township where the land is located. We think there can be no fault found with the terms.

There is steamboat and railroad conveyance to Bangor, and good roads from thence in as far as the Aroostook river, which is 150 or 200 miles from Bangor. On this river the traveller will find thriving villages, with schools, stores, mills, and good society. The only drawback to these advantages, that we have yet heard complained of, is that the winter is a little longer than in Massachusetts. This is true; but they are, at the same time, more easily endured, on account of the steady condition of the weather, and the bracing effects of the clear, pure air.

Fuel is abundant, and with a little foresight and preparation, the winters can be passed as comfortably here as anywhere in New England. We can truly say that we never suffered so much with cold in Maine as we have in Massachusetts, and we spent twenty-one years of our life in the old "Bay State."

We advise no man to start his family on to a new location, east or west, north or south, without at first going and giving the proposed place of settlement a thorough exploration; not only as to capacity of the soil and country, but as to its social privileges and prospects. The best place for a man to settle is where he and his family will be best contented.

We would, however, say to our friend that the "State lands" above referred to, do not offer all the good chances for such a person as himself to find an eligible farm and a pleasant home. In almost all the new towns and plantations in Maine, he will find lots partially cleared which may be purchased reasonably of the proprietors; and also farms under good improvement to be had also, for moderate prices. "Come and see."

FARMING IN WINTER.

What shall a farmer, as a farmer, do in the winter? He has much to do in the winter, peculiar to his profession—in his house—in his barn—in the woods—and at market. There is no need of his being idle. He has a great deal to do for the promotion of his interest. In the first place, if the rigors of the season drive him in doors, let him think himself a lucky man; for it is to the family that his most important duties are. Has he a wife and children? Let him make the first devote his thoughts and labor for the instruction and improvement of his children. See that they go to school and are furnished with suitable books. See that the winter evenings are employed in useful reading and study, with innocent amusement of diversion, rather than visiting the haunts of dissipation and ruin. Let the winter be devoted to duties of the fireside and the calls of social intercourse.

Having everything in order in the house, both as it respects the physical, moral and intellectual wants of his family, let his next attention be devoted to the domestic animals of the barn and fold. Keep the stalls clean. Blanket the horses—and if you do the same to the cows, so will the better. Make sure of as warm a place for them all as possible. Give them straw beds to sleep upon. Comfortable animals will thrive best and give back the best returns.

In the day-time, when your children are at school, cut and haul home wood enough to keep a year's stock of seasoned fuel beforehand. This is economy. In season, every farmer has enough to do in the winter; and that well done is often the most important and profitable labor of the whole year. Keep stirring and do good.

CULTIVATION OF CHICORY AND LIGUORICE.

Great quantities of chicory root, ground and prepared for use, are now imported from Europe. All the Germans in our cities use it in their coffee, and it is said to improve its flavor, while it is at least as healthy, and is much cheaper. It can be cultivated in almost every State, and no doubt would be a profitable crop.

Several gentlemen have recently acquainted the Patent Office with their success in cultivating the liquorice plant, which is hardly as far north as Connecticut. It is employed not only for medicinal purposes, but they say is used in preparing ale and porter. [Scientific American.]

When a native of Java has a child born, he immediately plants a cocoa tree, which, adding a circle every year to its bark, indicates the age of the child. The child, in consequence, regards the tree with affection all the rest of its life.

SORGHUM.

The cultivation of the Sorghum, or Chinese sugar-plant, has thus far proved so decidedly successful in this country, not only in the South, where it seems to have been demonstrated that two crops or cuttings of sugar-bearing stalks can be obtained in one season from the same roots of that year's planting, but even so far north as Minnesota, where it is testified that good syrup was made in 1856 from stalks hardly a hundred days from the seed, that we are impelled to urge upon our farmers and gardeners the importance of early attention to the procuring of seed and planting for the season just before us. Let us all grow the seed this year, so that it can never be so scarce that speculators may run it up to an exorbitant price. A great deal remains to be settled with regard to this plant, especially the best mode of converting its saccharine properties into crystallized sugar; and it is highly probable that better varieties of it will ultimately be discovered, at least for certain localities, than that now current in this country. For the present, however, it is advisable to continue and extend the cultivation of that which is accessible, and thus test the effect of acclimation on the character of the plant and the sweetness of its juice. We suspect that for Louisiana, Florida and Texas, the Sorghum of Southern Africa will ultimately be found preferable to that obtained from France by our Patent Office, and from China by France. If it prove that this plant, or certain varieties of it, can be grown from year to year in semi-tropical latitudes from the same root, as the cane is grown in the West Indies, and that two or more crops of sugar-yielding stalks may be cut from that root each season, then there can be little doubt that our Southern States are destined still to lead the North in the production of sugar. For the present, however, it suffices that the Sorghum may be grown wherever Indian Corn will usually ripen—that its abundant juice makes a very pleasant syrup or molasses, to which it is easily reduced by boiling away four-fifths of it in the ordinary mode of sugar-making from the sap of the maple—and that the leaves and stalks, whether green or dry, of the Sorghum, make an admirable fodder for cattle, horses or hogs, while the seeds are eaten with avidity by fowls also, to justify the general interest evinced in its cultivation. We propose, therefore, to condense into the smallest space some practical directions to the prospective cultivator as follows:

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What shall a farmer, as a farmer, do in the winter? He has much to do in the winter, peculiar to his profession—in his house—in his barn—in the woods—and at market. There is no need of his being idle. He has a great deal to do for the promotion of his interest. In the first place, if the rigors of the season drive him in doors, let him think himself a lucky man; for it is to the family that his most important duties are. Has he a wife and children? Let him make the first devote his thoughts and labor for the instruction and improvement of his children. See that they go to school and are furnished with suitable books. See that the winter evenings are employed in useful reading and study, with innocent amusement of diversion, rather than visiting the haunts of dissipation and ruin. Let the winter be devoted to duties of the fireside and the calls of social intercourse.

Having everything in order in the house, both as it respects the physical, moral and intellectual wants of his family, let his next attention be devoted to the domestic animals of the barn and fold. Keep the stalls clean. Blanket the horses—and if you do the same to the cows, so will the better. Make sure of as warm a place for them all as possible. Give them straw beds to sleep upon. Comfortable animals will thrive best and give back the best returns.

In the day-time, when your children are at school, cut and haul home wood enough to keep a year's stock of seasoned fuel beforehand. This is economy. In season, every farmer has enough to do in the winter; and that well done is often the most important and profitable labor of the whole year. Keep stirring and do good.

CULTIVATION OF CHICORY AND LIGUORICE.

Great quantities of chicory root, ground and prepared for use, are now imported from Europe. All the Germans in our cities use it in their coffee, and it is said to improve its flavor, while it is at least as healthy, and is much cheaper. It can be cultivated in almost every State, and no doubt would be a profitable crop.

Several gentlemen have recently acquainted the Patent Office with their success in cultivating the liquorice plant, which is hardly as far north as Connecticut. It is employed not only for medicinal purposes, but they say is used in preparing ale and porter. [Scientific American.]

When a native of Java has a child born, he immediately plants a cocoa tree, which, adding a circle every year to its bark, indicates the age of the child. The child, in consequence, regards the tree with affection all the rest of its life.

WINTER TWILIGHT.

Brief hours for thought; the dark and wintry day
Is deepening into night, and one pale star,
To guide the traveler with its tremulous ray,
Just glimmers in the purple depths afar;
Darkness comes stealing on; from labor free,
The weary woodman seeks his cottage door,
Leap at his coming, and press round his knee,
Through distant casements, lights are twinkling now,
Where busy matrons still the needle ply,
Or some pale student strains his aching eye,
And bends o'er classic page with thoughtful brow.
Stir we the fire, seek Pansy's wild domain,
And build some airy fablia's daisy bright again.

BETHEL FARMERS' CLUB.

The third meeting was held at the house of G. Chapman, Esq. Subject: The Rotation of Crops in Field and Garden.

A prominent idea connected with the discussion, was, that we should make a rotation of pastures into fields, and fields into pastures. Pastures in this country are generally poor, and lack in the essential properties for an abundant supply of feed. They are constantly cropped without any corresponding return. Some individual members had commenced breaking up their pasture lands, and planting potatoes, and by more or less manuring, should restore it again to pasturage. We can never have a good dairy without good pastures.

Some curious facts were stated. One man in this town had planted corn for thirty-five years in succession, and always had a good crop, but he had hauled all the manure of his farm on to that one piece, and let the overflow of the Androscoggin manure the rest of it. Instances were stated where beets and carrots had been raised on the same spot from 25 to 50 years, with uniformly good success. But in all these cases large quantities of manure had been employed. The principle of rotation was to draw material from the atmosphere, as well as from the soil. Many other suggestions were made which were not reported. The meeting was crowded by numbers. The next subject for discussion will be on the Kitchen Garden, and a report from members on newly tried vegetables.

B



THURSDAY MORNING, MARCH 5, 1857.

BANKS AND FREE BANKING.

There is a general feeling in the community, that there should be some change in the mode of establishing and conducting our Banks. This feeling has arisen from the fact that these institutions have departed, in a great measure, from the old, original mode of doing business, viz., that of loaning money to individuals on legal or simple interest, (as it is sometimes called) taking, therefore, the borrower's note with good endorser. They have substituted for this mode, the buying of drafts, or other paper, the vendor oftentimes making great, and to him, ruinous discount for the sake of obtaining the money. This is an "evil under the sun," and although the laws and Bank charters may be construed so as to allow it, the laws of trade and commercial propriety, and of the general good do not, and cannot allow it.

Look around among those who have recently failed, both individuals and companies, whether they belong to the list of great failures or little failures, and you will almost invariably find that for some time previous their capital has been "shaved," i.e. to use the common phrase, at some one or more of our banks. They have had no loans on easy interest, such as they could grapple with, and which, if they could have obtained, would have saved them and continued them in business, but they have been made the victims of usury; and though suffering it for a time, with the hope of being able to retrieve themselves and continue their business, have finally sunk under the load. This is a hard view of the case, but it is true. And this is done, too, by institutions, which, if the strict letter of the law were applied to them, could not stand an hour. Institutions, with hundreds of thousands of dollars of their bills in circulation, and but a few thousands of dollars of specie with which to redeem them if called upon suddenly.

They thus virtually substitute the confidence of the people for capital, and make the same people pay enormous interest on it. That is, the people pay large interest to the banks for being allowed to put confidence in them. This is not right. It is not the good old way, and our banks ought to quit the present system, or change their names. Let us not be understood as being opposed to banks. We are not. We are in favor of real, old-fashioned, sound banks of loan and deposit, or "discount and deposit." Banks that will keep themselves within the pale of the laws, take only legal interest, and keep themselves supplied with the means to redeem their bills, however sudden may be the demand. We shall probably be called an "old fogey" for this. Be it so. We had rather be an "old fogey," and have the country safe, than a "young firebrand," and go to smash in a hurry.

We do not altogether like our system of chartering banks. It must be done by an act of corporation, a company must be formed, and without it no bank can go into operation. We are not opposed to companies, or corporations. By their great things are done, such as no single individual could accomplish. But why should companies, or corporations be required in all cases to do that which an individual may do? Or, in other words, why should an individual, who is abundantly able, be forbidden to establish a bank, unless he and others obtain from the Legislature a special, formal act of incorporation? What can our legislature authorize what is called free banking on safe capital?

This system has for years been in operation in the State of New York, and time has tested its safety and pronounced it good. During the last year, three or four of our banks have failed, while in the great commercial State of New York, with many more banks than we have, and millions more of capital and circulation, only one little bank has been obliged to stop payment. The system is, briefly, somewhat like this: A controller is appointed, whose duty it is to receive for the State, such securities as may be deposited with him, on which any bank is to be founded. This security consists of deeds of unincumbered real estate, at a certain value, also, State, City, or Town scrip. He also procures blank bank bills. A person or persons wish to start a bank, they apply to the controller, here are deeds of real estate value, to some, here are some dollars of State scrip, and here is so much specie, take them into your custody and give me authority to issue bills.

If the controller is satisfied with the security, he grants the permit and delivers over a certain amount of bills. The State thus becomes virtually responsible for the redemption of these bills. There can be no more circulated than the controller gives out bills for, and in case of trouble he takes the whole matter into his hands, and converts the securities he has in his possession to the liquidation of the debt.

It seems to us that this is a good system. At any rate it has hitherto worked well in New York.

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

There is to be a meeting of this Society, at the State House, on Thursday of this week, which we doubt not will be a most interesting one, from the fact that a number of communications on the early history of our State, and other subjects connected therewith, are to be read. The meetings of this Society, which are held annually, are public.

Wm. Willis, Esq., of Portland, who succeeds Hon. Robert H. Gardiner, as President of the Society, will deliver an address in the evening.

The State of Maine says:

This society has issued a most valuable volume already, and a fifth one is in process of publication. The early history of Maine, in connection with that of Canada and Acadie, is most interesting of that of any portion of the continent. On her soil was planted the first English settlement in America, and it needs only a visit to a Webster to invest the shores of Sagadahock and the settlement at Naransauk with far more of historic and heroic interest, than are clustered about Plymouth Rock, or broken associations with the infant colony at Jamestown. A growing sentiment of devotion to our own romantic history is daily manifesting itself throughout the State. If it should reach the Legislature this year, the meeting might be one of surpassing interest.

In August of this year will occur the 250th anniversary of the first settlement of the English race on this continent, and within the limits of our own State. Why not at the coming meeting take measures to celebrate the anniversary of the most important event in the history of America?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY. Among the many political rumors that are flying about, we note the following of interest to our readers.

The Washington correspondent of the New York Courier, says that Hon. T. J. D. Fuller, of Maine, is to be Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under Mr. Cobb.

APPOINTMENT. We notice the appointment of Dr. Sweet, of Parisness, as Trustee of the Insane Hospital in this city. He succeeds Dr. Bennett, of Parisness, whose term of service has expired.

BANK COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

The report of the Bank Commissioners embodies much information of interest to the public, especially at this time, when the question of re-chartering the Banks in the State is under consideration. The Banks in the State are under a great deal of public notice, and a small space to a synopsis of its contents, this week.

The report opens with remarks upon our general system of banking. The Commissioners remark—

"Nearly all the banks existing under the present law, so far as we can judge, will petition the Legislature for a renewal of their respective charters, and in all probability there will be applications for new acts of incorporation. The number now in operation in the State is seventy-seven, and adding eleven Savings Institutions, there is a total of banking corporations of eighty-eight. About one-fourth part of which have a capital of only \$50,000—\$9 have capital less than \$100,000 and 28 a capital of \$100,000 and upward. The Canal and Casco Banks of Portland have the largest capitals, each being \$600,000."

They express their opinion that banks of large capital are better than smaller institutions, and believe "that hereafter no banks should be incorporated with a less capital than \$100,000." They also think a decrease in the number of banks would be of benefit to the State.

A large part of the Report is occupied with a detailed statement of the condition of the several Banks in the State. The Augusta banks all stand well. The following show the capital, circulation, amount of paper discounted, and amount of suspended paper in each—

Bank.	Capital.	Circulation.	Disc. paper.	Sus. paper.
Augusta,	\$88,000	\$75,389	\$514,904	\$11,862
Freeman's,	75,000	68,220	435,106	20,876
Granite,	75,000	8,906	468,717	20,876
State,	100,000	62,249	619,573	5,744

The above Banks paid the following dividends: Augusta, 4 per cent. in April, 3 per cent. in October; Freeman's, 5 per cent., each, in Jan. and July; Granite and State, same as Freeman's.

Thirty-one Banks are reported as having issued, the past year. None of the Augusta Banks are in the list. Those over issuing most largely are the Auburn, Grocers' (Bangor), Hancock (Ellsworth), Lewiston Falls, North (Rockland), Veazie (Bangor), and Bank of Winthrop Banks.

In speaking of the case of the Shipbuilders' Bank, to the Commissioners say that "the dividends of the bank may possibly be realized from the effects of the Bank will be very small."

The report concludes with the following summary of the condition of the Banks in the State:

Capital stock,	\$8,107,485
Circulation,	4,934,880
Discounted,	2,248,626
Profits,	49,206
Dividends unpaid,	102,530
Bills payable,	\$2,734

RESOURCES,	\$4,590,675
Loan,	609,906
Specie,	1,191,933
Deeds and bonds,	2,499,835
Bank charges,	26,086
Real estate,	102,612
Other,	28,472

Amount of paper discounted the past year, \$41,485,617.

Amount of suspended paper, 719,134.

October, 1855, Specie, \$141,127.

October, 1856, Specie, \$409,933.

October, 1856, Specie, 657,137.

" " Circulation, 4,894,223.

HORRIBLE OUTRAGE.

On the night of the 18th of January last, a respectable domestic, named Ellen Desmond, living in the family of one of the most respectable citizens of Boston, lost her way in the blinding snow storm, when returning from her sister's, and meeting a couple of men in the street she asked them to direct her home. Instead of doing they conducted her up Williams' Court, as far as the Herald building, into which they forced her, and then brutally violated her person. She was afterwards locked up in a room in the fourth story, and fearful of further insult and injury, she threw herself from the window. She was picked up by a policeman and carried to the General Hospital, where she died, on the 10th ult., from the injury received.

A coroner's inquest having brought these facts to light, two of the villains concerned in the outrage, Samuel A. Goodrich and James White, were arrested, and being brought before the Police Court on Friday last, the case was postponed for two weeks, and they were remanded to jail. Two others implicated in this outrage have fled the city. We hope they may be caught, and that the whole party may meet a justly deserved punishment.

HONOR TO THE LATE DR. KANE. Dr. Kane lingered until the 16th ult. The highest honors were shown his remains by the Spanish authorities at Havana. His body was placed on board the Cahawba, and arrived at New Orleans on the 23d ult. Here it laid in state, at the City Hall, until the following day, when it was placed on the steamer for Louisville. The escort to the steamer was composed of the military, Free Masons, Consuls, City authorities, and an immense concourse of citizens. On the consular, shipping and public buildings, flags were displayed at half mast, and minute guns were fired from sunrise until the embarkation of the body.

The City Council of Philadelphia passed resolutions of respect to Dr. Kane, and appointed a committee to make arrangements for the funeral. It is contemplated that the body shall be laid in state, at Independence Hall.

Appropriate resolves were also passed by the Pennsylvania Senate, and by a general citizens' meeting at Cincinnati.

MAPLE SUGAR. It is hardly time for tapping the maples here in Maine, but a very few days of favorable weather would set the sugar makers busily at work. A contemporary says:—

The product of maple sugar this year bids fair to be large, as well from the favorable weather as from the high price to which southern sugar has brought it. The farmers are even now making ready for the flow of sap, and it is altogether probable that a greater quantity of sugar will be made than during many years past.

The Manchester Mirror, referring to this subject, says:—

A gentleman from the upper part of the State informed us some days since, that the season for making maple sugar was coming in much earlier than usual, and that everything betokened that the present would be an excellent year. Our last fall of snow was a regular "sap snow," and a few freezing nights, with the pleasant days in the middle of winter, would be "juice" out beautifully.

POST OFFICE CHANGES. Mr. Charles A. White, of Gardiner, has received the appointment of Postmaster of that city, vice Dr. F. P. Theobald.

The Gardiner Journal says it is understood that he will also receive the appointment for the four years of Mr. Buchanan's administration.

A new Post Office has been created at No. 7, Washington Co., to be called Fuller. Levi Bailey is appointed Postmaster.

BUSINESS OF THE S. & K. R. R. The travel over the Somerset & Kennebec Railroad since the year commenced has been quite large, all things considered. The Skowhegan Clarion says, "the road is doing a fair business, notwithstanding the tightness of the times. The amount of freight is much larger than we anticipated, and the amount received for passengers will average over \$200 a week."

FLOWAGE LAWS AGAIN.

Mr. KORTS.—I was glad to read your remarks in a late No. of the Farmer, in relation to flowage laws, for certainly if any on our statute books needs revision, and alteration, these do. Our Courts rule that, under this law, a man may flow his neighbor's land twenty years in succession, doing damage all the time, and thereby gain an absolute title to flow over afterwards; titles obtained in this way are called "rights by prescription." Mr. A. being poor goes into the country and buys a lot of land, having on it a meadow of inexhaustible fertility, which he esteems highly, for it affords a plentiful supply of hay for his stock. Some years after, Mr. B. builds a dam, and erects a mill at the outlet of the stream, and flows his land and ruins his meadow. Mr. A. remonstrates but receives no redress, and being unacquainted with the law, and unable to contend for his rights, he suffers for twenty years, when his oppressor gains a perfect right to flow ever afterwards.

Now I would most respectfully ask, if there ever was a law emanating from any people civilized or savage, running down from former times to past the middle of the nineteenth century, more cruel and oppressive than this? It not only does not protect the honest and industrious citizen in the enjoyment of his rights, but it actually pays a premium to the wrong doer for the injury he inflicts upon him, and this poor man is doomed to see his most fertile and valuable land, waving in all the rich luxuriance of nature, converted into a stagnant pool, fit only to germinate disease, and become the residence of filthy and loathsome reptiles. This law is in direct opposition to every principle of natural and moral right, which lays at the foundation of society, and upon which our laws profess to be founded; it is a disgrace to our statute books and should be immediately abolished. EQUITY.

MONUMENT TO THE FOREFATHERS. We understand it is proposed to hold a meeting at the State House, some time this week, (of which due notice will be given,) for the purpose of raising funds towards building a national monument to the forefathers, at Plymouth, Mass. It is to be constructed after designs by Hannam, Billings, and others, and under the direction of Mr. Samuel H. Merrill, Portland, Agent for Maine, will call upon our citizens and give them an opportunity to aid in the work.

BEARS KILLED. Mr. Andrew Harvey of Cherryfield, discovering a bear's tracks, a few days ago, started off on a hunt which resulted in his finding and killing two bears, the largest one weighing 600 lbs.

CITY ELECTION. Our annual election for the choice of city officers is to be held on Monday next. Further particulars will be found in the notice of the City Clerk, in another column.

MARINE DISASTERS.

Brig S. Webster, of Lubec, before reported lost, was wrecked on the 25th, on the N. E. part of St. Domingo, during a northerly wind, and her way from Mayaguez to Cape Haytien, in ballast. When the gale subsided she was nearly broken up, and was in only two feet of water. Capt. M. Fadden, his wife and the crew, who had arrived home, remained on the beach 18 days, there being no house within sixty miles of the wreck. The U. S. Consul at St. Domingo city then sent a small schooner for them, and for what materials could be saved. They had to wait 28. The S. Webster was a good vessel of 199 tons, built in 1854, valued at \$10,000, and insured in New York at the Atlantic, Great Western and New York offices.

A letter from Long Beach, N. Y., to the New York agent of underwriters, dated 22d ult., states that the barque Eastern Belle, ashore on Long Beach, will probably prove a total loss, as she lies about midway between the bar and shore, and is full of water. She has her decks swept of midship house, poop deck, cabin washed out, and larboard rail gone. In the blow of 20th, 50 packages of wine and one box of paste washed overboard from the balcony of her cargo, 33 packages of wine, and her cargo of paste, will prove a total loss. About 1000 packages of wine was on the beach, and would be shipped to New York by lighters from the inside (Barnegat Bay) as soon as the weather permits.

FIRE IN MAINE. On Monday morning, 23d ult., about 10 o'clock, a fire broke out in the large block of stores, at the corner of the Commercial Hotel, which was entirely consumed. It consisted of four stories three stories in height, and was owned by heirs of James Arty, valued at \$4000, partially insured. It was occupied by O. K. & Co., and was a store of West India goods, who lost nearly their whole stock, about \$5000, insured for \$4000. Joseph Clark, tailor and ready made clothing, who occupied the second story, lost his stock, valued at \$2000, and his goods were mostly saved. He was occupied by B. H. Starbird, shoemaker, occupied over O. K. & Co., and lost everything, except his tools. Henry E. Morgan, who was occupied over O. K. & Co.'s store, for sale room of oaks and blinds, who lost all his stock. The adjoining two story wooden building was owned and occupied by Job Lord as a variety store and dwelling. His goods were mostly saved. He had an insurance of \$1100 on building and \$900 on goods.

On the night of the same day, the store at East Pittsfield, owned by Gowen Hathorn, and occupied by Simons & Wyman, was destroyed by fire, together with the stock of goods. The loss was about \$1400. Store insured for \$400, and there was also an insurance on the goods.

On the night of the 26th, the store at East Pittsfield, owned by Gowen Hathorn, and occupied by Simons & Wyman, was destroyed by fire, together with the stock of goods. The loss was about \$1400. Store insured for \$400, and there was also an insurance on the goods.

NARROW ESCAPE. A day or two since as Mr. Samuel Haskell, of Cape Elizabeth, was crossing the railroad track in his sleigh, at the end of the Laughlin's Bridge, he heard the whistle of the locomotive. It was just upon him, and he had time to make a backward leap when the engine struck the sleigh, smashing it to fragments, and throwing the horse into the canal. Mr. Haskell was not hurt, fortunately, but the way of a second would have cost him his life. The sleigh was taken out of the canal injured. It was the Portland and Kennebec train, and we are informed that the usual alarm was not given.

FATAL ACCIDENT. George N. Wiggins was painting the gas holder in the Naumkeag Factory's gas holder, on Monday last, and was killed by a light in his hand, which he had just stepped upon a valve, which let a column of gas fall from his lamp and caused an explosion as loud as a nine pound cannon, which wrecked the building and shook the earth. Mr. Wiggins was burned so that the flesh peeled from his legs as he walked into his house, and he died in the course of twelve hours. He leaves a wife and three small children.

A LIBERAL REWARD. The sum of \$2000 in all, is now offered for the arrest of the murderer of Samuel T. Norcross, who was brutally murdered near the foot of the Kennebec River, on the 19th of January. The murdered man belonged to East Lexington, Mass. For the arrest of the murderer, the Governor of Pennsylvania has offered a reward of \$1000, to which the people of Maine have added \$2000, the friends of the deceased \$300, and the Governor of Massachusetts \$500, making in the aggregate two thousand dollars.

NEW TEMPERANCE LEGISLATION. The Indiana Senate have passed to a second reading a bill providing that every person who shall desire to indulge in the drinking of spirituous or malt liquors shall procure a yearly license or permit from the clerk of the Court; the Clerk to keep a registry of all persons who may apply for permits. All fines for violations of the law to go to benevolent institutions; all persons who shall sell to persons who have no permission to drink to be fined in heavy sums, &c. The reading of the bill was received with considerable mirth. The author of the bill defended it on the ground that men had to get liquor to sell goods, and the Temperance Committee, to sell liquors, and he was in favor of making every man who desires to drink liquor, carry a license or permit in his hat, which would be obliged to show before obtaining any spirituous or malt liquors as a beverage.

GATHERED NEWS FRAGMENTS, &c.

Rents in New York. It is said that rents have greatly appreciated in New York City—ranging from 15 to 30 per cent., and in some favored localities 40 per cent. At the same time there has been a great depreciation in rents and the value of real estate in Brooklyn, Williamsburg, Jersey City, Hoboken and all the suburban villages, which is attributed to the difficulties which have been experienced during the last and previous winters in reaching the city, owing to the ice in the rivers.

Insurance Losses. It is not alone, says the Boston Journal, the insurance companies of this city and New York who have suffered severely from losses this winter. The same is true in England. Returns have been made showing that on the whole coast of the United Kingdom more than one hundred and fifty vessels were driven ashore during a single gale, and of that number eighty were totally wrecked. The sum total of such a disaster can only be counted by millions.

Michigan Legislature. Detroit, Feb. 17. The Legislature adjourned on Monday morning. Acts were passed disposing of the lands given the State by the General Government, to certain railroads; a banking law, to be submitted to the people in 1858; granting aid to Michigan emigrants in Kansas; and organizing an Independent Supreme Court. Resolutions were adopted instructing our Congressmen to admit Kansas as a free State.

The California Vigilance Committee and the Legislature. It is stated in the San Francisco Sun, that the late Vigilance Committee of California will apply to the Legislature of that State, now in session at Sacramento, for an act of amnesty in regard to the proceedings in San Francisco. The democratic members, who compose a large majority, are said to be bitterly opposed to the committee and will refuse to pass any such act.

Suicide of Members of the Vigilance Committee. J. Haines Davis, formerly of New Bedford, who committed suicide in San Francisco, Jan. 14th, by taking strychnine, was an officer of the Vigilance Committee, and is said by the San Francisco Sun to be the ninth member of that Committee who has committed suicide.

Arrival of a Boston Fire Engine in California. We learn by the last steamer that the magnificent engine, built by William C. Harneman & Co., of Roxbury, for Howard C. Harneman & Co., of San Francisco, has arrived in safety. The machine cost about \$8000.

The United States and Mexico. The Presse, a Havana paper, states that Don Joaquin Rangel had arrived in that city from Vera Cruz, on his way to the United States. It is said that the mission of Senor Rangel is to arrange the peace between the United States and Mexico, for the protection of the United States, over the republic of Mexico. He would remain a short time in Havana before embarking for New York. The Presse adds, that if this plan is carried out, it would be the poisonous shade that will soon finish that unhappy republic.

Magnificent Donation. Baltimore, Feb. 16. Mr. Peabody has donated \$300,000 for the establishment of an Institution in this city, to embrace a free library, a Musical Academy, and picture Gallery. The donation is to be increased to \$500,000.

Crushing Out the Garrotes. Three of these New York scamps were sentenced by the City Judge a few days since—Peter Rowe to twelve years and six months, James Kelly to fifteen years and three months, and John Clark to ten years and six months—all in the State Prison. Judge Russell's remarks were not mealy-mouthed at all, and the sentences are just as they should be.

Cholera at Demarara. The New York Express has accounts from Demarara to about the middle of January. Cholera was prevailing to an alarming extent at Georgetown. The authorities were exerting themselves to the utmost to check its progress. H. M. ship Perseverance, which had taken over detachments from the 1st and 2d West India Regiments from Barbadoes to Demarara, returned to Barbadoes with the troops on board, having been unable to land them on account of the disease.

New York Prohibitory Liquor Law. A select committee has reported to the New York Senate a new prohibitory liquor law, which it is thought may pass. It is quite rigorous in its provisions. The first section makes it a misdemeanor for any person to sell any intoxicating liquor as a beverage, and punishes such offense by fine and imprisonment; second makes it an offense, punishable by fine, to be intoxicated in any public place.

Harbor Thieves Arrested. Two thieves named George May and Ransom Russell, have been arrested in New Haven for plundering vessels at that port. Their depredations have extended to a large number of boats, chiefly Portland vessels, weather bound in that harbor. The total amount of their robberies is not fully known, but it is supposed to be very great.

The late Earthquake in Candia. The published report of the results of the earthquake of Candia, shows that 10,222 houses were ruined or seriously damaged, and that 1122 persons were killed and mutilated.

Freshets in Canada. By the rising of the Grand River, says the Hamilton Spectator, great destruction of property has been caused. Numerous bridges have been carried away, and at Galt Brantford and Port Hope much suffering was occasioned by partial overflows of the town. The Montreal Transcript says the St. Lawrence has overflowed its banks, and Griffintown is inundated for the second time. The lower part of the town is entirely submerged.

The Wisconsin Personal Liberty Bill. The Personal Liberty Bill which has passed the Wisconsin Legislature directs trial by jury to be provided for persons claimed as slaves, punishes false and malicious arrests of persons as fugitive slaves with \$1000 fine, and gives power to county courts to grant writs of habeas corpus.

Fatal Accident. In Etta, Tuesday morning, 24th ult., as Mr. Sewall Abbot was engaged in loading logs on a sled, one of them rolled off, striking him on the head, and killing him instantly. He was about 45 years of age.

Fire at East Pittsfield. On Monday night, 23d ult., the store at East Pittsfield, owned by Gowen Hathorn, and occupied by Simons & Wyman, was destroyed by fire, together with the stock of goods. The loss was about \$1400. Store insured for \$400, and there was also an insurance on the goods.

Fire in Lewiston. At Lewiston Falls, the barn and house belonging to Mr. Henry Wright, were totally destroyed by fire on Monday morning 23d ult. Eight sheep and one hog were burnt. Loss \$1500. Insured for \$700.

The New York Post Office Question. It is stated that Attorney General Cushing has given an opinion against the validity of the title of the brick church, which has been purchased by government for a post office in New York. This reopens a vexed question, which it was hoped had been settled.

Destructive Freshet. Cincinnati, Feb. 25. The Wash river is higher than it has been since the great flood of 1844. Great damage is done on the Illinois side, bridges, fences, &c., being washed away.

WASHINGTON ITEMS.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23. (N. Y. Herald Correspondence.) A gentleman who arrived here this evening direct from Mexico, confirms the Herald's intelligence of the treaty recently negotiated by our government. My informant states that the treaty required from our government is \$25,000,000, for which Mexico will surrender the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The treaty is offensive and defensive. Information had been received, my informant states, the day before he started from the City of Mexico, that France and England had agreed to furnish Spain the means to invade Mexico, the object of which was to get possession of Tehuantepec, and that it had created quite a commotion.

Gen. Cass received an official notification to-day from Mr. Buchanan, of his appointment as Secretary of State and despatched a letter this evening, informing the President elect, that he accepted the nomination.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24. In a letter from Judge Lecompte dated January 9 to Attorney General Cushing, he says he has "too much self-respect to respond to any intimation unfavorable to his office, or to the country, unless it be requested by the President to do so." The amazing information that he was to be removed disabused him of that full confidence upon which he had relied as the last security against injury, censure and condemnation without a hearing, which he would not ask to be redressed. Never having felt temptation to contribute to peace by pandering to popular spirit, before the appointment of Gov. Geary, he should regard the removal as a personal insult, and he would not be moved by the President's order to do so. The amazing information that he was to be removed disabused him of that full confidence upon which he had relied as the last security against injury, censure and condemnation without a hearing, which he would not ask to be redressed. Never having felt temptation to contribute to peace by pandering to popular spirit, before the appointment of Gov. Geary, he should regard the removal as a personal insult, and he would not be moved by the President's order to do so.

The Senate's Committee on Finance has agreed to report amendments to the tariff bill, Mr. Hunter, chairman of the Committee, has prepared a bill on his own responsibility, and will endeavor to procure the consideration of the subject to-morrow.

Correspondence of the New York Herald.) The tariff bill as it passed the House has been reported back by the Finance Committee, with several small amendments. Lined is placed on the free list, and 40 cents taken off. The schedules of 100 per cent. and 40 per cent. are reduced to 30 per cent., and schedules C, D, E, F, G, and H, are reduced one-fifth. Mr. Hunter, the chairman of the Finance Committee, will offer a substitute on his own responsibility to-morrow, preserving schedules A and B as in the House bill, but reducing schedules C, D, E, F, G, and H, and F, G and H one-fifth. This schedule C is reduced to 25 per cent. D to 19, E to 15, F to 12, G to 8, and H to 4 per cent. Raw silk and manufactured goods to go on the free list.

It is understood that the members implicated in the investigating Committee will each demand a separate trial before the House, which will more than consume the remainder of the session. Consequently the appropriation bills, and all other legislation, will go by the board.

Intelligence has been received from the bearer of dispatches to the State Department and the Mexican Legation, that they will be here to-night, with the new Mexican treaty. The government had previously received advice from the late French minister, dated 24th of February, stating that he was negotiating a treaty, but as no instructions were given him to acquire territory, its final conditions are not distinctly known. Accounts sent to the Mexican Legation by the late French minister, dated 24th of February, stating that he was negotiating a treaty, but as no instructions were given him to acquire territory, its final conditions are not distinctly known. Accounts sent to the Mexican Legation by the late French minister, dated 24th of February, stating that he was negotiating a treaty, but as no instructions were given him to acquire territory, its final conditions are not distinctly known.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25. Mr. Edwards has prepared a statement of considerable length, solemnly asserting the falsity of the charge against him, and his innocence, both in fact and intention. He says the charges are unsupported by proof, and result only from mistaken inference and impression. Mr. Matteson will also submit a defense.

The House was in continuous session seven hours and a half, in the case of Mr. Gilbert. The resolutions were passed, and Mr. Sumner rested during the day, at Philadelphia. He reached Washington this evening, somewhat weary, but quite comfortable.

Mr. Stockell and Senor Tassara, to-day, presented the credentials, and were received by the President, as Ministers respectively from Russia and Spain.

In the Senate, to-day, Mr. Bright presented the memorial of A. G. Sloo for a contract for a semi-monthly paper for the Tehuantepec route, which was referred to the Post Office Committee. The memorial says the route will be opened within sixty days, with stages, from the head of navigation on the Coahuila river to the Pacific coast, and that the necessary steamships are prepared to put on the route from New York via Cuba, from New Orleans via Vera Cruz to Santhel, and on the Pacific to San Francisco. He asks \$250,000 per annum.

The Minnesota Bill passed the Senate just as it came from the House, permitting aliens as well as citizens to vote in forming a State constitution.

(Correspondence of the Tribune.) The tariff is in order in the Senate to-morrow. Mr. Hunter's amendment is practically for a reduction of about 20 per cent. all around on the existing Act, with the exception of the free list. It furnishes no sufficient guaranty against the augmentation of imports. Unless the House bill be accepted, there is no probability of modification this session. Commercial men, capitalists, manufacturers have urgently appealed to Congress to make a reduction in order to avoid a financial revolution. There were numerous telegraph dispatches received from leading merchants in Boston, New York and Philadelphia by Senator Sumner to-day on this subject.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26. The House took summary action to-day on all the remaining general appropriation bills upon its calendar, in order to proceed uninterruptedly on the reports of the Appropriation Committee, which came up to-morrow. Nothing whatever was done with them to-day.

Mr. Sumner was in his seat about half an hour to-day, and was warmly welcomed by his friends. During the proceedings of the House to-day, Mr. Wright of Tenn. approached the seat of Mr. Harris of Md., for the purpose of speaking to that gentleman.

Mr. Sherman, who was standing by, fancied that Wright acted in a menacing manner towards him, in consequence of the sharp personal remarks that recently occurred between them in debate.

Sherman threw a handful of wafers in Wright's face, when the latter attempted to strike him. Sherman then clapped his hand into a side pocket, as was supposed, for a pistol. At this point mutual friends intervened.

Quere of a duel are current between Messrs. Sherman and Wright.

The following is said to be a correct version of the new Mexican treaty. It contemplates a loan of \$15,000,000, of which \$3,000,000 are to be paid in cash, and the balance to be paid by the adjustment of a joint commission. The remainder of the loan is unrestricted. Twenty per cent. of the Mexican customs are to be appropriated for its repayment. The treaty also contemplates a joint postal arrangement via Tehuantepec, as well as the Transit route. There is no stipulation for thecession of any territory.

LAYER FROM HAVANA. New York, Feb. 23. The Black Warrior, from Havana, the 21st inst., arrived here last night. The funeral of Dr. Kane at Havana was attended by a large procession of all the Americans in the city, as well as by the Vice-consul General of the Island and other Spanish officials.

The conduct of General Concha on the occasion is spoken of in the highest terms by all the resident Americans.

There was no report of interest stirring at Havana. The report of the decline in the New York sugar market, brought by the Cahawba, caused much excitement among the sugar speculators. The stock at Havana is reported at 70 cents. Exchange has improved, and freights for American ports are brisk.

THE CASE OF MRS. DECKER. Mrs. Matilda Decker, of Long Neck, Staten Island, who is charged with causing the death of a little girl, by beating and other cruelties, was indicted and arraigned yesterday, at the General Session of Richmond county. The jury found an indictment for manslaughter in the fourth degree, the highest penalty for which is confinement in the state prison for two years. The prisoner pleaded "Not guilty."

An application was made by her counsel, George White, Esq., to have the amount of bail fixed by the Court, so that she might be released from confinement, but the Court took the papers and will fix the amount of bail to-day. The trial-day will take place at the Court and Terminus, in May, before Judge Strong. (N. Y. Com. Adv., 21st.)

LEGISLATIVE COMPEND.

SENATE. The Senate concurred with the House in referring the bill concerning free banking to a joint select committee.

CHAPMAN from the Joint Select Committee on the Revision of the Statutes, reported in part that they have carefully examined titles seven and ten and are satisfied that they contain all the existing laws relating to those titles. The Committee recommended that they be referred to the Senate, and the session of the Legislature, not to be

